



DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

News Release

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR

LAURA H. THIELEN, CHAIRPERSON
Phone: (808) 587-0320
Fax: (808) 587-0390

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HE'EIA KEA HARBOR COMMUNITY WATCH KEEPS EYES OUT FOR PUBLIC SAFETY

KANE'OHE – Kane'ohe community members have joined with Department of Land and Natural Resources to form a neighborhood watch group at He'eia Kea Small Boat Harbor. The community watch group will provide a presence in the harbor and help cut down on illegal activities in the harbor and parking lot.

"We welcome the commitment and involvement of community members and harbor users who want to help keep this harbor a safe and enjoyable area for fishers, boaters and families who enjoy the bay," said Laura H. Thielen, DLNR chairperson.

"Neighborhood, or community watches, with support from law enforcement, are an effective way to send a message that unruly and illegal behavior will not be tolerated in this area," she said.

"This partnership demonstrates the Department's efforts to increase public safety at recreational areas and collaborate with communities, which is part of our Recreational Renaissance initiative," Thielen added. "DLNR recognizes that even in times of limited resources, we can form collaborative partnerships and work together to keep our recreational facilities clean, protected, and preserved."

After receiving training from DLNR's Division of Conservation and Resources Enforcement (DOCARE) and the Honolulu Police Department, the group, numbering about 20 members (including 3 officers from HPD and 3 officers from DOCARE) made its first patrol walk in early December.

Patrols are scheduled on the second Tuesday of each month, and spot patrols at more critical times intermittently. When members are with the police or with DOCARE, they are a visible force in yellow community police action tee shirts, walking and therefore making a statement.

They also look for ways to improve the harbor appearance and safety to deter illegal activities (such as getting rid of beer bottles, broken glass, trash, graffiti that needs to be painted out, etc)

The next meeting of the He'eia Kea Harbor community watch group will be March 9, 2010 at 6:30 p.m. at the pier. Interested persons are encouraged to join the watch group.

"This is a team effort between DLNR, DOCARE, HPD, and boating community," Anita Balch, community watch coordinator for He'eia Kea Harbor said. "We are all in this together and the whole community will benefit.

"In the past there has been harm done to people, drug dealings, illegal drinking, gambling, vandalism, and theft at the harbor. Due to the presence of the community watch group, this situation already appears to be improving. Hopefully this can be a positive alternative to possible closing of the parking lot at night. We all need to be the eyes and ears to deter illegal activity in order to keep the harbor and parking lot 'user friendly' for our boating and fishing community," Balch said.

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For more information news media may contact:

Deborah Ward

DLNR Public information specialist

Phone: (808) 587-0320